

## Another Short Story

E. Devilish Delby twirled the ends of his mushtack and gribbled. A gassly smile wrinkled his fat. Tried to the tacks was little Alyce and coming along as fast as a freight train was a freight train.

Little Alyce yelped for hell, but the dirty E. Devilish Delby merely smired in bree. Little spits fell from his mouth and his nose dripped in disgust. Little Alyce was about to faint, but fortunately she passed out.

It was only one year ago that the little mope was engrained to E. Devilish Delby, the town councilman and professional villain. People would grin amuckably as they passed, arm in stump, along the boredwalk, she in her yellow bikini and he in his green wheelchair. They were all nice to him, not just because he was crippled, but because he was rich.

He had made his fortune in junk cars after coming home from the war. The war! He frowned to thout abink it. He looked down at his wooden leg and thought about that night mission in Korea. Korea! He had been assigned to lead a patrol through enemy lines and when he tried to run away, his men shot him.

Barney ... what was his name, the one who told him there were no mines in that field? Barney Cooper, that was it! Barney had always been in the jeep. He never got to ride in the jeep. But Barney knew about jeeps.

Barney had grown up on a farm where they grew jeeps. He could remember, from his first recollection, things he could never forget. What were they now? They slipped his mind. But Barney was always planning to go bach home to Butte, Montana, and grow on his own farm.

And that dream had come home for Barney. Here he was in Boise, Idaho, selling cars in a lot. He sold a lot of cars. He was not proud, but he was happy. And why not? Didn't Susan love him? No one really knew. Any why not? No one really knew.

Susan was certainly quite a girl. She was beautiful and intelligent and always had a gourd wood, especially for everyone, but sometimes for others. Just because she was silly, people called her strange, but then Paul was the only one who understood.



Susan knew that Barney loved her, but it was Paul only Paul and that's why. So what? Paul, the alcoholic dapper playboy heir to the Boxite Mines of Boise. Paul treated her like dirt. And why not? She seldom took a bath.

It was after the car accident that Paul began seeing her regularly. Susan was the nurse who changed his plasma. He couldn't sleep for winks after the accident. He could still see the tree in the yellow glare of headlights, hear the scream of brakes, the rending crunch of twisted metal. Even though he had been six miles away from the scene of the accident, he could envision every detail. And the same night, he himself had been injured. While guzzling at a local tavern, a bottle of Muscatel exploded in his mouth.

Arnold knew how it happened. Arnold was the bartender at the Foghorn Cafe. That night he had been making a Molotov cocktail in a Muscatel bottle, and when he turned around for a gasoline-soaked rag, Paul took the mixture and drank it. Arnold cursed his luck. It was the fifth time in two days he had been foiled in his attempts to burn down the tavern in hopes of collecting the fat new insurance policy he had taken out on it, much to the owner's astonishment. He watched them carry Paul out and brooded over the dirty glasses. Then a strange thing happened.

While watching the strange thing happen, Arnold absent-mindedly popped a maraschino cherry into his mouth. In the middle of a laugh, it caught in his throat. Panicking, he jammed a swizzle stick into his neck. He begged the crowd at the bar to call for help, but most of them pretended to ignore him. A sympathetic drinker gave Arnold a dime with which to call for help himself, but, while staggering toward the corner phone booth, Arnold collapsed upon the juke box, depositing the dime in a reflex action, and died to the strains of Let It Be.

Arnold's mother looked out the window. She knitted herself another sock and rocked in her chair. Outside, the hearses passed. "What nice flowers!" she thought, unaware that it was her son in whose honor the funeral was being held. Fred's body rolled by unaware.

Arnold's brother, Fred, had been a famous actor in his day, but dying interrupted his career. He had played everything from the fairy godmother in Cinderella to the syphilitic Mafioso in Cinderella. His greatest



moment on stage was when, as Tybalt, he won the sword-fight with Romeo and ended the play two acts early.

Sylvia had seen him in Stop the Wagon, I Want to Get Off. She hated him, but she didn't think much of the show. When she went back to the office to type up the review, Mike, the editor, was there.

"Hi, Mike," she breathed passionately.

"Hi," he answered without emotion.

Out on the street, Louie gazed at the sky. His raggedy bum clothes were damp with dampness. His old bum shoes were on his feet. One hand in a litter basket, the other in his ear, he looked steadily at the sky without pausing in his activity.

"Yup," he said reflectively. "Looks like rain."

The End

### Rapencils

A fyn yung fella was once marriage to this pregnable womin who had a crazing to eat the witches garden. As hir hasbeen could not refrain her from clamming over the witches wall, he had to go into the garden to get her out. The witch cot him and sed, "Okay, fren. Wot is yer game drubbing aboot in my garden with a pregnable womin eating on all floors?"

"Pleez, owld thing, let my wrife has her fill of garden as she is indeed garryon a feet us will soomday be a lufly yung laydee naymed by the naym of Rapencils."

"Yer owld womin ken eat her film of guardian if an onlee if yoo gif me yer wombful of Rapencils wen it gits bon."

"Oh, all rite," sayed the hasbeen of Rapencil's mom, "but just get out of the carrots, pleez, your standing on my wives fingers." So the wife ate all the guardon and and delivered a child to the witch, c.o.d., wen it got bon.

Sure enuf the witch locked up the Rapencils in a tower